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March 1985

# THE STAR OF THE EAST

نُجُومُ الْمَشْرِقِ

an ecumenical journal dealing  
specially with the oriental and  
eastern orthodox churches.

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An Ecumenical Journal dealing specially with  
the Oriental and Eastern Orthodox Churches.

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JOHN THOMAS, KARINGATTIL  
PANDALM. P. O.



## *Editorial*

# Liberation Theology and the Vatican Instruction

There has been considerable furor, especially in the Roman Catholic Church, about the assessment of "Liberation Theology". The Pope's views are contested by people within his own church. Even Cardinal Ratzinger and Cardinal Casaroli have given expression to conflicting viewpoints, indicating disagreement in the Vatican itself.

This is perhaps as it should be. There should be debates and disagreements in each church so that the people can be exposed to differing aspects of the question.

In the case of Liberation Theology, those who are generally opposed to it are people who have stakes in the present established order. The Vatican, at least one part of it which handles power and property, would naturally have an interest in keeping investments in the World Capitalist economy safe and productive. Liberation theology is rightly perceived as a threat to the World Capitalist System, especially in a Roman Catholic area like Latin America, where Christian theology has considerable influence on the minds of people.

The usual Capitalist argument, whether openly or by implication, against Liberation Theology is that it is tainted with Marxism. And Liberation theologians are anxious to defend it from this charge—mainly for the sake of public relations and better relations with the Vatican. With the present Pope especially anti-Marxism seems to be a most essential credential for being a Christian. The Vatican "instruction" on Liberation Theology, has one whole chapter on "Marxist Analysis". Its main point is that "atheism and the denial of the human person, his liberty and his rights, are at the core of the marxist theory". In that statement there is a good example of how truth and falsehood can be mixed together. There is no doubt that atheism is a central tenet in Marxist ideology. But no one who has some idea of "Marxist theory" can say that "the denial of the human person, his liberty and his rights, are at the core of the Marxist theory". That is not a fact. People who say so, do it out of



malice or ignorance. Marxist *theory* certainly exalts the human person above all else. There is no denial of his liberty or rights, but only a radically different understanding of the rights of the working man or woman to be free from oppression and exploitation. Marxist *practice* may in many cases be different. That even Marxist may not always deny. But to say such a thing about Marxist *theory* shows only how carelessly the instruction has been prepared, and how unhelpful it is for a correct assessment of liberation theology.

We can agree with the Vatican instruction that Christian theologians should use secular philosophical theories only after careful critical examination in the light of Christian theology. We have openly disagreed with the position of certain liberation theologians that "Marxist analysis" is the right tool for Christians to understand the meaning of God's actions in our time. There need be no doubt that there is a fundamental disagreement between the premises of the faith of the Church and the ideology of Marxists.

What we find difficult to accept is the affirmation of Cardinal Ratzinger in his Press Conference presenting the Instruction to the public (L' Osservatore Romano, 10th Sept 1984, p. 5); "with today's presentation of the 'Instruction on some aspects of Liberation Theology', critical reflection has arrived and is now within every one's reach". We need better critical reflection than what the Instruction has succeeded in providing. It has certainly generated a debate within the Roman Church, and in this sense it has a positive value. But its analysis of the issue between Christian Faith, Marxist Analysis and Liberation Theology remains amateurish and unscholarly. The Press Conference made it clear that the Instruction was no condemnation, but an invitation to debate.

When a newspaperman pointed out that the liberation theologians' use of Marxism was parallel to Thomas Aquinas' use of Aristotle, Cardinal Ratzinger admitted that "use may always be made of valid elements contained also in non-Christian knowledge, while criticising these ideologies with the key of realistic knowledge". That is a reasonable position, and we only wish it were more clearly expressed in the Instruction itself.

For us the problem with liberation theology is not its Marxist ideological taint. Such taints seem to be inescapable. Much opposition to liberation theology including the Instruction carries with it an anti-Marxist or free-enterprise-liberal ideological taint, which is even in less conformity with Christian values. Our problem can be better put in the form of certain questions, some of which are partly implied in the Instruction, but which should really be discussed between the Vatican defenders of the faith and the liberation theologians; e.g.

(a) Are Liberation Theologians distorting the Gospel of Jesus Christ in too one-sided a way by undervaluing its emphasis on the Kingdom of God and reducing it to political, economic and cultural liberation?

(b) Are the exegetical methods and principles enunciated and used by liberation theologians too one-sidedly made to order to yield the results they want?

(c) Does liberation theology do justice to the Sacramental and pastoral ministries of the Church and the needs of people other than for political, economic and cultural liberation?



## Minutes of the Holy Episcopal Synod (20th Feb 1985) on The Ecumenical Study Document on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry submitted to the Synod by the World Council of Churches.

The Synod considered the Study Document on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry with great interest, and had it further examined by a commission specially delegated for this. It is not yet in a position to give a final assessment of the document which would require volumes. The following interim comments are sent to the World Council of Churches for their consideration.

1. The Synod feels that this is an extremely important milestone in the ecumenical movement. Theologians representing a hundred different traditions have found a common ground on which to pursue the dialogue on the issues dividing Christians. The Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches is to be highly commended on this major achievement.

2. The part of the document which deals with Baptism is, understandably the least controversial, and embodies a very large area of convergence of understanding and conviction. It is perhaps true that any given single tradition may however not want to start with this document as the basis of its own teaching on Baptism, which lacks an adequate theology of baptism, especially for the following two reasons:

In interpreting the meaning of Baptism, incorporation into the Body of Christ (para 6) is now given a place but not adequately expounded in the document. It is at this point that there are divergences of position among us, and it will be good to devote further attention to this point.

A similar point of divergence is the relation between baptism and chrismation. The differences in practice and therefore in understanding can be a hurdle in the dialogue between East and West in the Church. For the Orthodox this point of divergence creates many difficulties in accepting the baptism of other churches. Our perspective at this point is briefly alluded to at the end of para 20 of the document.

Apart from these two important points, the Synod finds much of the rest of the document quite useful as a starting point for an ecumenical dialogue with other communions.

3. On the Eucharist, the Synod finds a large area of agreement, especially where it affirms the anamnestic<sup>1</sup> or participatory and anticipatory or eschatological character of the Eucharist, and expounds its epikletic<sup>2</sup> character – the Eucharist as the work of Christ the High Priest through the Holy Spirit, a fore taste the Kingdom. The Synod is also in agreement about the need for renewal of eucharistic life and teaching in every church and about the need for frequent communion.

What the document does not discuss adequately has to do with the questions: (a) "What is the minimum requirement about agreement in faith in order that two churches may be in communion with each other?", and (b) "is there any positive witness in refusing with pain in the heart to be in communion with another church?". We hope the Faith and Order Commission will devote some attention to these questions.

Over all, the Synod feels that this middle part of the document is perhaps the richest.

4. Understandably the document is least satisfactory and most controversial on the question of the Christian Ministry. The Synod feels that the problem in the discussion of the ministry could be focussed around three points, where the document needs improvement:

- (a) the nature of the Church as participating in the ministry of Christ;
- (b) the meaning of ordination as a sacramental mystery;
- (c) the relation of the ordained ministry to the other Sacramental mysteries of the Church.

The Church is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ, with the apostles and prophets, martyrs and saints built into the structure. The Church as the Body of Christ who is its head, includes Christ himself. If Christ is regarded as somehow standing apart from the Church, commissioning it, the meaning of the ministry would be misunderstood. The mystery of the Church in which God in Christ incorporates us sinners into the very Person of Christ cannot be grasped merely as a commission or as a function. The Church is also a presence, the very presence of God in Christ. The ministry becomes recognizable only where the Church is experienced as a divine-human presence and comprising of Christ and previous generations of Christians.

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1. anamnesis = recalling, making present.  
2. epiclesis = invocation (of the Holy Spirit)



The Church as a whole is a divine presence, and the fullness of this presence requires the presence of the ordained ministry within it. The act of ordination, by epiclesis of the Holy Spirit, is itself a sacramental mystery and the ordained person remains a sacramental mystery, manifesting the divine presence in a special way. Paras 41 ff of the document recognize the epicletic and Sacramental character of the act of ordination to a certain extent. The grasping of what is implied in these paragraphs can go a long way towards preparing the ground for mutual recognition of ministries and for the churches' communion with each other, which has a great deal to do with that recognition.

The recognition should be facilitated if the sacramental character of the ordained person and of the community of ordained ministers can be more widely recognized. So long as the ordained ministry is regarded by some churches as mere office (*amt*) or function and not as a sacramental mystery, mutual recognition of ministries would be difficult.

The document could be improved by a discussion of the relation of ordination to Baptism-Chrismation, and to the Eucharist, as well as to other sacramental mysteries like the absolution of sins, and the anointing of the sick. It could also be improved by interpreting the ministry of the church as Christ's ministry by the power of the Holy Spirit to the whole world, and by expounding the ordained ministry more integrally within the ministry of all who are baptized and Chrismated.

5. The Synod has given some thought especially to the question of women's ministry in the Church. There is no doubt that women are full members of the Church and not in any sense inferior to men. We do revere the Virgin Mary, the Holy Theotokos, above the Apostles; many women are among the recognized saints and martyrs of the Church; Churches are consecrated in their names and they are honoured intercessors in the Church.

It is recognized also that, in our altered social condition, women could take a more active part in the ministry of the Church than in the recent past especially in the area of intercessory prayer, teaching and diakonia. This is indeed beginning to happen in our churches and the Synod encourages this trend. On the matter of ordaining women to the episcopate or the presbyterate, we take seriously the Apostolic tradition which does not permit women to preside at the sacramental mysteries of the Church. We take seriously the fact that Christ himself, who was never afraid of violating wrong social customs, did not choose women to be Apostles, though he had many highly competent women disciples. The Apostles did not ordain even the ablest of women (Phoebe, Euodia, Syntyche, and others) to the

presidency of the churches which they established. And the Christian Church as a whole did not ordain women to the priesthood for nineteen centuries.

These are weighty considerations. They are just as weighty as the facts: that men and women are equal in the sight of God and in the Body of Christ; that women in the Old Testament were civil rulers (Esther), Judges (Deborah), Prophets, (Miriam, Hannah) even war leaders (Judith and Jael); that women in the New Testament played crucial and decisive roles in the ministry of Christ (Mary, Anna, Elizabeth, Mary Magdalene, Joanna & others Lk 8:1-3), and in the early Church (1 Cor 9:5, Lk 24:1, 10ff; Prisca, Phoebe, Mary, Stachys, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Persis, etc Rom 16; Euodia, Syntyche, Phil 4:23). The Synod is convinced, however, that there is deep wisdom in the Tradition of the Church, which cannot always be penetrated or perceived by the rational mind, and which should not be too lightly broken on the basis of a rational argument alone.

The ordination of women to the episcopate and presbyterate is likely to create a fresh obstacle to the mutual recognition of ministries; but we have confidence in the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit that the Church will be led in the ways of God.



International Round Table Conference of  
Religious Leaders and Experts on "New Dangers  
to the Sacred Gift of Life: Our Tasks"  
Moscow, February 11-13, 1985

## Stop Darkness at Noon - Save Life

Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios,  
India

Let me express to you first my gratitude to God that this round table conference on "New Threats to Life" can be held and that I can be here to day. We live in a world where there is no security for any human being or for non-human beings. It is just possible that, even while we are sitting here, peacefully talking to each other about how to avoid a nuclear catastrophe, the mushroom clouds can appear in some part of the world spilling disaster over all of us, no matter where we live. That is the kind of world we live in. This is not just rhetoric. This is the plain, brutal fact. Our minds boggle at this possibility. So we refuse to believe it, even when the evidence is mounting. I am grateful to God that this round table can be held, and I hope and trust in God that the evidence will be made available here in a lucid form, and that it will help many people to become aware of the dimensions and scale of the peril that faces the sacred gift of life, and to begin to do something about it.

It is in such a perilous world that I add my own humble, warm greetings to all of you who have taken the trouble to come here. I am grateful to His Holiness, Patriarch Pimen, to His Eminence, Metropolitan Philaret, to Dr. Alexei Buevsky and to all the others who have taken the trouble to call us together.

I have not been in a position to take part in the preparatory process for this round table, but I would like to apologize to you for all the inadequacies of preparation, for the very short notice given to some participants, and for the insufficient expertise and preparatory materials available to us here.

Sufficient evidence, however, has been available since the end of 1983. And the evidence was scientifically produced, scientifically verified by others. It was on 31 October and 1 November 1983, when we had the scientific conference on The World After Nuclear War, in Washington DC, the capital city of the USA. There one hundred high ranking scientists from all over the world met to assess together their own work of two years on the biological, physical,

and climatological consequences of differing magnitudes. Six months before that, on 25 and 26 April 1983, an epoch-making conference on "The Long-term Worldwide Biological Consequences of Nuclear War", had been held at Cambridge, Massachusetts, with forty scientists present. Among them were such luminaries as Paul Ehrlich of Stanford, Carl Sagan of Cornell, Stephen Gould of Harvard. This conference appointed an expert committee who prepared the basic document discussed at the October/November meeting in Washington. This was published in *Science* on 23 December 1983 (Vol. 222: No. 463) as a Christmas gift to humanity. Besides the basic document signed by the preparatory committee of twenty scientists (including Norman Myers of Oxford and Rafael Herrera of Venezuela, the other 18 being from North America), there was another significant paper published in the same issue of *Science* by Carl Sagan and four Californian scientists which describes the method of study used, and the results in greater technical detail. I hope you have these papers before you.

An original study by Carl Sagan was verified, I understand, by Soviet scientists at the Computing Centre of the USSR Academy of Sciences using the BESM-6 machine and the GEA mathematical model. This was of course based on a 5000 megaton (12% of our present stockpiles) explosion scenario. The Soviet scientists, I understand, came to the following conclusion based on Carl Sagan's primary data:

- a) Nuclear winter would envelop the earth, irrespective of the location of the nuclear explosions.
- b) During the first month after the explosions the air in the layer close to the soil would grow colder by 15 to 20 degrees centigrade on the average.
- c) This would lead to change in global air circulation as well as wind velocity and direction.
- d) Sources of drinking water would freeze in many areas. Ecological chains would break. Crops would perish.
- e) Living beings on the land surface - humans, animals, plants, and micro-organisms would die out.
- f) Gradually, as all phytoplankton is destroyed, life would also perish in the ocean.

Scientists would admit that all scientific predictions, and especially when such complicated forecasts and estimates of wind direction and volume of matter consumed are involved, may go wrong by a certain factor. In fact it has been argued by other scientists like Edward Teller, that certain facts like the amount of water-vapour present in the atmosphere, have not been taken into account in the calculations. Of course, the models used for the scientific



predictions were developed for other purposes like weather prediction and computing the possible effects of volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. But, despite all imprecise elements in the calculations, the overall impact of the study should shake our foundations.

As our experts will no doubt tell us in greater detail, even a very limited nuclear war, involving only 100 megatons of exploding power (our present arsenals have 12,000 megatons of primary strategic and theatre weapons and possibly a total of more than 20,000 megatons, including the 30,000 lower yield tactical warheads and munitions) will have disastrous long-term and short-term consequences.

The American study has several scenarios with variables in the megaton yield of 100 (megatons attack on urban-industrial targets), a 300 MT southern hemisphere war, a 1000 MT interchange, a 3000 MT exchange with another 3000 MT counterforce response, a 10,000 MT massive war, and even a 25,000 MT future war. The results would vary, depending upon whether the explosions are at or near the ground surface, on urban or forest areas, in high atmosphere or stratosphere, and so on. The vertical optical depth or thickness of the nuclear smoke-cloud produced by the explosion is another important variable. The dust mass (total tonnage), range of dust size, and amount of water present are other variables. Fire area, fire plume heights, fire duration, radiation emission, dust and smoke injection rates, temperature perturbations and solar energy fluxes, meteorological perturbations, inter-hemispheric transport, pyrotoxin generation, ozone depletion in the stratosphere, snow-fall and rain, perturbations in planetary wave amplitudes which may be critical for the transport of the nuclear debris, and other variables were taken into account, though accurate predictions on several of these variables are extremely difficult.

Despite some uncertainty factors, the main thrust is quite clear. I shall state the conclusions cautiously and carefully:

1. A relatively large (5000 megaton) nuclear explosion anywhere around the globe would have major climatological effects that would endanger life in general on our planet.
2. A "limited" nuclear war concentrated on urban and industrial centres, with a 100 megaton yield in explosion will also, besides burning out several hundred cities, lead to severe climatological effects, dangerous to life and health of all people everywhere.
3. A one megaton warhead, bursting in the air, will lead to total destruction in about 250 square kilometres of urban area; even one-tenth of a megaton airburst can level out and burn out an area of about 50 square kilometres.

4. The major climatological factor, referred to as "nuclear winter", comes from the emission and pumping of nuclear debris, dust and smoke into the stratosphere (i.e. the layer above the troposphere or lower atmosphere), where the air is comparatively stable and non-turbulent. The dust can remain there for long periods of time and shut out the sunlight substantially. There will be significant surface darkening on the earth for considerable periods of time. Temperatures, even in summer can go below freezing point in the temperate zones. This in turn will lead to large perturbations in global wind patterns. Crops would certainly be damaged and famines would result. Epidemics are also possible. Chlorophyll activity on the earth can be dangerously lowered. Large numbers of living beings will die including plants, trees and bacteria. The long-term effects of these are hard to predict.
5. The nuclear debris injected into the stratosphere will soon be exchanged from hemisphere to hemisphere. Soon after nuclear exchange in the northern hemisphere the climate in the southern hemisphere would also be substantially affected to the point of seriously endangering life all over the earth.
6. The effects of radio-active fall-out and pyrogenic toxin and consequent air pollution will affect all life on earth, even if the nuclear war is limited in megatonnage and location.
7. A limited nuclear war can kill close to a billion people or more. Half as many at least would be severely injured, disfigured and disabled. During the course of the first year after a limited nuclear war, the survivors of a nuclear war, irrespective of where they live, including non-human beings, may face death and extinction, as the total eco-balance is disrupted. This eco-consequence can be more devastating in its effect than the climatological aspect we call the nuclear winter.

#### Some Questions

1. Given these cautious conclusions, why do we allow anyone to go on manufacturing nuclear weapons? Are the peoples of the world so powerless and impotent vis-a-vis their governments, some of which seem to be either blind or insane? Why do the people allow themselves to be so deceived as to accept the false argument that "reduction of arsenals is more necessary than a freeze and therefore let us concentrate on reduction and forget the freeze?" Let us be clear: we need freeze, reduction and total elimination. We should



have them in that order. So let us have freeze now, reduction soon, and total elimination in the near future. The peoples of the world should say this clearly.

2. The leading nuclear powers have a major responsibility in this regard. The government of the Soviet Union has already affirmed its support for an immediate freeze, a negotiated reduction ensuring equal security for all and a final elimination fairly soon. So has the Delhi declaration of the six nation non-aligned summit. Is it a matter of false pride that keeps the USA, UK, France, China and others from joining the other socialist countries and the non-aligned world in a determined joint initiative? Or is it the power of those who make profit from the arms race and the arms trade? Or is it also the fact that democratic political institutions in market economy countries are financed by the corporations and defence contractors? Whatever it is, the heaviest share of the responsibility now devolves on the peoples of nuclear countries and non-nuclear countries. If the peoples can understand the situation, things can change.

3. What are the public media in all our nations doing in this regard? Can we as religious organizations put some pressure on the media? To do that effectively religious organizations will have to develop some competence in this regard. Why do we not as religious organizations, mobilize our own scientists and social thinkers to give priority attention to these matters? Can we help the media in our countries serve the real needs of our people and help them understand reality as it is?

4. We have, in our last Round Table Conference, clearly affirmed our strong opposition to the so-called Strategic Defence Initiative (wrongly known as "Star Wars"), and we reaffirm our clear position against this initiative, for at least the following eight reasons:

- (a) It is not primarily a defence initiative, its basic purpose is aggression and world domination, the world "defence" in the S.D.I. serves only to mislead.
- (b) As a defence strategy, the experts are nearly unanimous that it cannot be an effective means of defence in an all-out nuclear war.
- (c) It is so expensive a proposition, that in a world of so much poverty and want there would be no justification for it, even if it were half expensive.
- (d) The majority of the people of even the USA in whose interests S.D.I. is being developed, are avowedly opposed to it.

- (e) It is a gross violation of existing Anti-Ballistic Missile and other international treaties on which world peace is dependent.
- (f) Instead of stopping the arms race, it serves only to accelerate the race beyond all limits.
- (g) Once the system is set in place it may not at all easy to dislodge them from space and dispose of them without serious peril to humanity.
- (h) Space being only 100 to 200 miles away, these weapons become uncomfortably close to every human being on earth and thus imperils the lives of all people everywhere.

In spite of all these cogent reasons which render the S.D.I. both futile and foolish, research and development continues at a fast pace. We had agreement, at our last Round Table, between American space experts, and Soviet experts, on the draft of a treaty to ban weapons in space. Why is it that governments cannot agree?

The new threats to peace, since our last Round Table, are more in the nature of fresh information about the consequences of a nuclear war, than many actually new threats. The physicians of the world had already drawn our attention to the impossibility of providing sufficient care to the survivors of a nuclear war. The new scientific evidence shows that the world after even a limited nuclear war can only be hell. Let me repeat, we must, as reasonable beings, stop the nuclear arms race. We must, as humanity, obtain a freeze on the research, development, manufacture and deployment of all nuclear weapons. We must as reasonable human beings immediately reduce our nuclear stockpiles by negotiated agreement and by unilateral actions. We must very soon eliminate nuclear weapons all together from the face of the earth. Humanity must build a world without nuclear weapons before this century is over. To help reach that goal is the urgent task of all religious organizations.

Metropolitan Philaret has already specified the main theme: *New Dangers to the Sacred Gift of Life: Our Tasks.*

We deal with this theme under three sub-themes:

- 1) Recent Scientific Data on the Disastrous Effects of Nuclear War;
- 2) A Strategy for Reducing Threats to Peace in the World Today; and
- 3) The Tasks of Religious Circles and other Public Forces.

Our time is limited. We will need to work in plenary most of the time, but will also need to do some drafting. We should now in this session decide what documents we need to produce, and



possibly also appoint a Drafting Committee which can take notes from the beginning.

I would propose to you the following documents:

- (a) A Communique giving the basic details of our meeting.
- (b) A Statement - somewhat longer, of the content of the main theme and sub-themes based on the presentations and discussions; and
- (c) Possibly some letters to the nuclear powers, to the non-aligned movement, and to others as we may decide.

The drafts will have to be ready by **Tuesday (tomorrow) night**, so that we can adopt them on Wednesday morning. This means hard work for our Drafting Committee as well as for our translators and typists.

The congenial and friendly atmosphere of the Publications Department and the genial assistance of His Eminence Archbishop Pitirim, we know, will facilitate our work. We will all have a long day today. Some of you have just arrived over long distances, and it is unfair to make you work so hard the first day. But we are under pressure of time.

Once again, on behalf of the Working Presidium and my own behalf, let me extend to you a most cordial and hearty welcome, and three days of pleasant and fruitful work together.

We want to **express** a special word of thanks to our secular experts who are willing to share their knowledge and experience with us. Without their sustained help, we cannot, as religious organizations, make much headway. We know that they cooperate with us so readily and willingly, because the peril is common for all humanity, and all of us have to work together to save the sacred gift of life.

The dangers facing humanity today are daunting, formidable, unprecedented. The hopes are small, sometimes even feeble, but always precious. We have the United Nations as a forum for national governments to meet and confer. Let us cherish and support it. We have the Gromyko-Schultz Geneva agreement to open comprehensive negotiations for reduction of nuclear weapons. That is indeed a very precious hope. We have the 6-nation Non-Aligned Movement Summit and its Delhi Declaration which shows that non-nuclear governments are now actively concerned about nuclear war and its consequences. Let us lend our support to it, so that governments can exert some pressure on other governments.

But above all these things, to me, are the stirrings of the divine through the movements of the human spirit. The divine power working through the human spirit is more powerful than the 50,000, or more megatons of explosive power in our nuclear arsenals. The peoples of the world are astir. They will not tolerate Star Wars and the pursuit of the nuclear arms race when they become fully aware. To contribute to that awareness and stirring among the people is the sacred task of religious organizations today. Let us dedicate ourselves afresh to our goal - to save the sacred gift of life from nuclear catastrophe. Trusting in the Divine Spirit, let us get to work.



## Communique of the International Round Table Conference of Religious Leaders and Experts on New Dangers to the Sacred Gift of Life: Our Tasks

60 religious workers and scientific experts from 27 countries of Asia, Africa, North and South America, Western and Eastern Europe, met at the Conference-Hall of the Publications Department of the Moscow Patriarchate, in Moscow from February 11 to 13, 1985 in a Round Table Conference on "New Dangers to the Sacred Gift of Life: Our Tasks".

The present meeting is the third of its kind convened by the Working Presidium of the World Conference: Religious Workers for Saving the Sacred Gift of Life from Nuclear Catastrophe (Moscow, 1982) to elaborate further its decisions.

The preceding Round Table Conference were held in March 1983 on "The Economic and Moral Implications of a Nuclear Freeze", and in April 1984 on "Space without Weapons".

This time the conference has brought together representatives of Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Judaism, and scientific experts. The participants were deeply moved by the scientific data presented to them on the disastrous consequences of a nuclear war including the nuclear winter. They renewed their commitment to their common sacred duty - to help the preservation of the gift of life on the earth. Messages of good wishes had been received from several prominent religious leaders, among them the Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England.

Metropolitan Philaret of Minsk and Byelorussia, Chairman of the Presidium of the 1982 Moscow World Conference in his introductory speech reviewed the work done by the Working Presidium in the context of the international peace movement. He stressed the urgency of the statement of the World Conference that "in order to save life, it is necessary to abandon the false understanding of national security and narrow national interests and to become aware of the menace that hangs over all of mankind and over life itself". Religious leaders were challenged to review in principle "the theological attitude towards war, which was shaped through centuries of human history, for the situation in the world, which requires a new human consciousness, is characterized by the fact that the problem of war represents today a complex of issues which should be grasped together and taken into account".

After silent prayer and the introduction of the participants, the conference was addressed by its Moderator, Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios of the Orthodox Church, Catholicate of the East, (India), who gave an impressive summary of some of the published articles on the nuclear winter. He acknowledged the factor of uncertainty in the computer predictions, since there are so many variables which are unpredictable. But the main thrust of the research is quite clear. Whatever the size of a nuclear war, disastrous climatological, environmental and biological consequences are bound to follow. The scientists may express uncertainty on several factors. But they cannot deny that in any scenario, the consequences would be unacceptably disastrous - in the number of people killed, in the hostile nature of the environment in which the survivors will have to live, in some form of nuclear winter produced by clouds of dust and smoke from a nuclear explosion, and in changes in climate.

"Given these cautious conclusions, why do we allow anyone to go on manufacturing nuclear weapons?" - the Moderator asked. He also asked the public media to review their role in informing the people of these disastrous consequences. Only the human spirit can rise above the tens of thousands of megatons of explosive power in nuclear weapons, and the people of the world must work together to steer the world back to the paths of sanity.

The Round Table Conference focused on three main subjects:

- (a) recent scientific studies on the disastrous consequences of a nuclear war;
- (b) a strategy for peace in the light of recent developments in peace efforts; and
- (c) the tasks of religious circles and other public forces working for peace.

There were four important presentations by experts on recent scientific studies. The paper by Prof. George F. Carrier of Harvard University on "Nuclear Winter: the State of the Science" was read by Prof. Bruce Rigdon of Chicago. The paper while stressing methodology and the element of uncertainty, confirmed the results of earlier studies. Academician Boris V. Rauschenbach made a presentation based on the Soviet studies of the subject, which showed that whether a nuclear war was of a magnitude of 10,000 megatons or only 100 megatons, the climatological effects would be disastrous. The results of American studies have been confirmed by independent Soviet studies. Melting of mountain glaciers due to high temperatures in the heated layers of the atmosphere could cause widespread floods. Warm oceans can generate stormy winds such as humanity has not seen before. The destruction of civilian nuclear power plants will substantially increase the already high level of radiation and keep it high for a long time.



Prof. Wilfried Bach, one of the leading European researchers in the field, from the University of Munster in the Federal Republic of Germany, made a well documented and detailed presentation on the consequences of a nuclear war, based on an evaluation of recent research and on powerfully impressive slides from Hiroshima. The impact of the presentation on the participants was immense. They were convinced that any nuclear war would be beyond the limits of risk which humanity can take. Responding to the element of the high uncertainty in the scientific predictions pointed out in the paper of Dr. Carrier, Prof. Bach drew attention to the fact that the element of uncertainty did not justify taking decisions involving such high risks. Prof. Rauschenbach agreed with this position, and suggested that where such high risks were involved, as engineers always do in the construction of a bridge or building, the worst scenario should be taken into account thereby reducing the risk.

Dr. Vladimir S. Preobrazhensky of the Institute of Geography of the USSR Academy of Sciences, in his presentation on "The Growing Threat to the Environment" confirmed the assessment of the disastrous ecological, climatological and biological consequences of any nuclear war. Prof. Bach made a second contribution on the environmental consequences with detailed charts and graphs.

In their agreed statement the participants said: "The first consequence almost immediately after the blast is that the earth's surface would become pitch-black. This would be equivalent to only about 1% of the normal sunlight on a clear day. This is extremely dangerous for plant photosynthesis and would cause the death of a large variety of plants. The darkness will last for months and possibly much longer. Any humans who might have survived would face a future of starvation.

"Because of this intense darkness the temperature on the land surface drops to very low levels - in many areas to freezing conditions of less than minus 20° C or in some cases even much lower. The consequences are clear: many plants, animals and humans will freeze to death. In coastal areas, where water temperatures are higher, the climate may not be as severe but the differences in temperature between the land surface and the water will produce violent storms and blizzards.

Still another terrible effect is that the fires, in addition to their own destructive power, will generate huge clouds of toxic fumes which will shroud the land with a poisonous smog persisting for a long time.

"In addition to darkness, freezing cold and toxic gases the victims of a nuclear blast will be bombarded with radio-active particles not

only immediately after the blast but for months on end. As a result of this the immune system of any human survivors would be so seriously damaged that, in addition to famine, people would face worldwide epidemics. Even if survival were possible for some time the damage to reproductive organs drastically reduces the possibility of giving birth to normal children.

When at last the darkness has cleared away and the sunlight returns to the earth, the damage to the ozone layer in the stratosphere will mean that the sunlight will have an abnormal amount of dangerous ultra-violet radiation. This will have two major effects, it will drastically increase the rate of skin cancer, and it affects the food chain by interfering with the pollination of plants through insects and by destroying marine plants in the upper ocean layer.

"Another important aspect in this changing picture is that we now know that all of the phenomena which we have described will be world-wide. Scientific studies indicate that even subtropical and tropical warm areas will be subjected to severe frost which, even it last only for very short periods, will be sufficient to kill all vegetation. Though we once believed that there would be sanctuaries in the Southern Hemisphere to which a few people could flee, it is now clear that these effects will also be felt throughout the Southern Hemisphere - even though there may be a short delay.

"The combined impact of these phenomena will be to destroy the life-support system of humanity throughout the world. But what is most shocking about all of this is the realization of how little of our present nuclear stockpiles it would take to unleash this horrifying scenario. In fact it would require less than 1% of these stockpiles, an amount that could be fired off by only one or two nuclear submarines".

On the second sub-theme there were four main presentations: Dr. P. T. Podlesny of the Institute for the USA and Canada Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences, in his presentation on "The Importance of the New US-Soviet Talks", expressed the hope, echoed by the participants, that the talks which are to begin in March would lead to specific reductions in nuclear weapons and to space without weapons. Dr. Jorge Serrano of the Centre for Economic and Social Studies of the Third World in Mexico, in his thoughtful paper "To a New Danger A New Strategy: Towards a New Moral Order", questioned the morality of seeking "to legitimize the unbound exercise of power", and of putting forward the concept of competitiveness in achieving superior and dominant power as a goal for nations. Dr. Serrano, who is also President of the Latin American Council for Peace Research, called for "a careful examination of the theological, moral and philosophical contents of each religious tradition" in order to arrive at



the basis for a new international moral order, founded on a commitment to humanity and not to narrow national interests. Several participants enthusiastically supported this idea and asked for further work to be done to elaborate the basic principles of such an order, in cooperation with secular thinkers.

Dr. Carl Reinhold Braakenhielm of Sweden, in his presentation on "The Contribution of European States to the Preservation of Peace", reported on the follow-up measures of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, including the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament working in Stockholm since January 1984. Two working groups have started work in December, the first on political agreements and the second on technical measures like confidence-building through lowering military postures on both sides of the present confrontation. Bishop Dr. David Preus of the American Lutheran Church, USA, made a strong plea for a positive strategy without hardline confrontation.

Presentations were made by Mr. Daljit Sen Adel, a Buddhist and Advocate of the Supreme Court of India, and also by the Moderator of the Round Table, on developments in the Non-Aligned Movement, especially the more recent Six-nations Summit/Nyerere of Tanzania, Alfonsin of Argentina, de la Madrid of Mexico, Palme of Sweden, Papandreou of Greece, and Gandhi of India and the Delhi declaration which has emerged from it.

The recent initiative by some governments to constitute the Contadora group was also welcomed as a positive development in the machinery for peaceful settlement of conflicts. The participants stressed their appreciation of these significant government initiatives for peace from non-nuclear nations and decided to respond to their appeal to the people.

In this connection the participants noted with satisfaction that many governments, both nuclear and non-nuclear, were taking very seriously the initiatives of religious organizations in this respect. For example, Bishop Karoly Toth of Hungary and Revd. Avery Post of the USA in their capacity as co-chairmen of the Karlovy Vary meeting of the churches of Eastern Europe with the churches of the USA addressed the same letter to President Regan and Chairman Chernenko. The latter replied in a positive way, affirming the importance of the peace work of religious organizations.

The participants were pleased to hear about the Five Continent Peace Initiative in which governmental and non-governmental agencies cooperate in the struggle for peace and wished them success.

In discussing a strategy for peace, participants reaffirmed the inseparable relation between peace and justice and the need to relate disarmament to human development everywhere.

On the third sub-theme "Tasks of Religious Circles and Other Public Forces", there were several presentations and interventions, among others by

- 1) Sheikh Ahmed Keftaru, Chief Mufti of Syria, Moslem
- 2) Venerable Thich Minh Chau, Vietnam, Buddhist
- 3) Oberkirchenrat Rudiger Schloz, Federal Republic of Germany, Christian
- 4) Chief Rabbi Shaeovich, USSR, Jew
- 5) Khambo Lama Gaadan, Mongolia, Buddhist
- 6) Revd. Dr. Crispin Mazobere, Zimbabwe, Christian
- 7) Supreme Mufti Ahmed Zabara, Yemen, Moslem
- 8) Rev. Shiyoji Hirayama, Japan, Christian
- 9) Revd. Dr. Martin Bailey, USA, Christian
- 10) Dr. Lubomir Mirejovsky, Czechoslovakia, CPC, Christian
- 11) Venerable Indaratana, Sri Lanka, Buddhist
- 12) Venerable Dr. Pharama Khemapali, Thailand, Buddhist
- 13) Dr. Eric Weingartner, Canada, World Council of Churches, Christian
- 14) Prof. Dr. Totiu Koev, Bulgaria, Conference of European Churches, Christian
- 15) Mr. Kazimierz Morawski, Poland, Christian
- 16) Chief Rabbi Laszlo Salgo, Hungary, Jew
- 17) Archbishop Kirill of Smolensk, USSR, Christian
- 18) Mr. Otto Hartmut Fuchs, Berlin, Christian
- 19) Dr. Wolfgang Heyl, GDR, Christian
- 20) Archimandrite Tiran, USSR, Christian

On the basis of these presentations, the participants worked out a programme for the future activities of religious organizations.

The participants adopted a comprehensive report encompassing the main findings on the three sub-themes, and approved the draft of a letter to heads of state of the USSR and the USA and of another letter to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement.



The Conference closed with a concluding speech by the Moderator, Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios, followed by a silent prayer of the participants.

Upon the completion of the last session a press-conference was held at which delegates and guests answered many questions of Soviet and foreign journalists.

The participants of the meeting were received by His Holiness Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and All Russia, who gave a gala reception at which he addressed the eminent religious leaders and scientists, gathered together in Moscow, with greetings, and congratulating them on the successful completion of their work together, wished them further success in the sacred cause of peace.

The participants expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the Russian Orthodox Church for the hospitality which provided a favourable atmosphere for the business-like flow of the Conference.

## International Round Table Conference of Religious Leaders and Experts on "New Dangers to the Sacred Gift of Life: Our Tasks"

Moscow,  
Feb. 11-13, 1985

To: His Excellency Mr. Rajiv Gandhi  
Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement,  
Prime Minister's Office, New Delhi.

Your Excellency,

The Round Table Conference organized by the Working Presidium of the World Conference: Religious Workers for Saving the Sacred Gift of Life (Moscow, 1982) on the subject "New Dangers to the Sacred Gift of Life: Our Tasks" held in Moscow from February 11th to 13th, 1985.

- after having analysed recent developments in the world situation
- recognizing the value and strength of the New Delhi Declaration of the non-aligned summit as a source of encouragement for all peace workers
- after extended exchange of information and insights on the heavy burden on humanity of the arms race and especially of the nuclear arms race,

wish to felicitate the Non-Aligned Movement for having taken the initiative in launching a new and urgent appeal for peace and for the right to live, for us and for future generations.

The Round Table focused on the results of recent scientific studies of the possible climatological and ecological consequences of a nuclear war, and particularly on a nuclear winter which can render life impossible on our planet.

We are fully in agreement with your appeal for a total ban on the production and testing of all nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, and for keeping space free from all weapons, about which subject we had a Round Table Conference a year ago.

The survival of humanity as a whole demands that we unite our efforts in order that the world may not fall into darkness and destruction. The Round Table supports the efforts of the Non-Aligned Movement for Peace, and the religious organizations associated with it will try their best to make known and disseminate widely the contents of the New Delhi Declaration.

With the assurances of our very high consideration, and with warm greetings, we remain,

Yours in peace,  
on behalf of the participants of the Round Table



## STATEMENT ON NUCLEAR WINTER

### [Round Table International Conference on: "New Dangers to the Sacred Gift of Life: Our Tasks"]

We, 60 religious workers and scientific experts from 27 countries of Asia, Africa, North America, South America, Western Europe and Eastern Europe, meeting from February 11th to 13th at a Round Table conference in Moscow, at the invitation of the Russian Orthodox Church, wish to make the following agreed statement, after having considered the results of the new scientific studies on the disastrous consequences of any nuclear war, and a renewed strategy for peace in the light of recent developments.

#### 1. Recent Scientific Studies

Until recently many war strategists and military advisors have operated on the assumption that a nuclear war is containable, winnable and survivable.

But now, new research results both in the USSR and the USA confirmed by the research community world-wide, have completely changed our picture of what the disastrous effects of a nuclear war would be like.

What we had overlooked was the enormous impact on world-wide climatic conditions which would result from the smoke, soot and dust from large city and forest fires set off by nuclear explosions. We now know that these fires produce large quantities of smoke and soot which will fill the lower atmosphere. At the same time the upper atmosphere becomes loaded with fine particles of dust. This combination of high altitude dust and lower altitude soot effectively blocks sunlight from reaching the surface of the earth, bringing about disastrous consequences to all living beings.

The first consequence almost immediately after the blast is that the earth's surface would become pitch-black. This would be equivalent to only about 1% of the normal sunlight on a clear day. This is extremely dangerous for plant photosynthesis and would cause the death of a large variety of plants. The darkness will last for months and possibly much longer. Any humans who might have survived would face a future of starvation.

Because of this intense darkness the temperature on the land surface drops to very low levels - in many areas to freezing conditions of minus 20° C or even lower. The consequences are clear: plants

animals and humans will freeze to death. In coastal areas, where water temperatures are higher, the climate may not be as severe but the differences in temperature between the land surface and the water will produce violent storms and blizzards.

Still another terrible effect is that the fires, in addition to their own destructive power, will generate huge clouds of toxic fumes which will shroud the land with a poisonous smog persisting for long periods of time.

In addition to darkness, freezing cold, and toxic gases the victims of a nuclear blast will be bombarded with radio-active particles not only immediately after the blast but for months on end. As a result of this the immune systems of any human survivors would be so seriously damaged that, in addition to famine, people would face world-wide epidemics. Even if survival were possible for some time the damage to reproductive organs drastically reduces the possibility of giving birth to normal children.

When at last the darkness has cleared away and the sunlight returns to the earth, the damage to the ozone layer in the stratosphere will mean that the sunlight will have an abnormal amount of dangerous ultra-violet radiation for several years. This will have two major effects: it will drastically increase the rate of skin cancer and will affect the food chain by interfering with the pollination of plants through insects and by destroying marine plants in the upper ocean layer.

Another important aspect in this changing picture is that we now know that all of the phenomena which we have described will be world-wide. Scientific studies indicate that even subtropical and tropical normally warm areas will be subjected to severe frost, which, even if it lasts only for very short periods, will be sufficient to kill all vegetation. Though we once believed that there would be sanctuaries in the Southern Hemisphere to which a few people could flee, it is now clear that these effects will also be felt throughout the Southern Hemisphere - even though there may be a short delay.

The combined impact of these phenomena will be to destroy the life-support systems of humanity throughout the world. But what is most shocking about all of this is the realization of how little of our present nuclear stockpiles it would take to unleash this horrifying scenario. In fact it would require less than 1% of these stockpiles, an amount that could be fired off by only one or two modern nuclear submarines.

It should be admitted that there are many uncertainties and unknowns and that there remains much work to be done. But the notion



of Nuclear Winter is not a fantasy of the scientists. None of the present uncertainties are large enough to call into question the overall conclusions that have to be drawn from these findings, namely: in a Nuclear War there will be no winners even if the attacked nations does not retaliate. In a Nuclear Winter it is doubtful that there will be any survivors. But unlike the normal winter and seasons which are parts of the cycle which gives us life, Nuclear winter is not inevitable but the result of human decision. Therefore, all of us who want to be survivors must use all our energy to make sure that a Nuclear Winter never sets in.

## II. Towards a New Peace Strategy and a New Moral Order

Sub-theme II dealt with the subject "A Strategy for Reducing Threats to Peace in the World Today". Three areas of current concern received attention: the New Geneva Talks between the USSR and the USA; the role of non-aligned countries in strengthening peace in the world; and the contribution of the European states to preserving the peace.

The Round Table members welcomed with hope the talks between the USA and the USSR for working out effective agreements towards the prevention of the arms race in outer space and towards its cessation on Earth, towards limitation and reduction of nuclear armaments and towards increasing strategic stability. Positive results will not only increase global security but will also provide opportunity to use resources now used for military purposes to meet the urgent needs of mankind. The Round Table urged both countries to make every effort to provide far-reaching agreements necessary to stop the nuclear arms race and to move toward the speedy elimination of nuclear weapons.

Round Table participants noted with appreciation the role and new initiatives of non-aligned states in calling upon the nuclear powers to reach agreement and end the arms race. Of similar importance is their call to other nations to remain non-nuclear. The recent meeting of the heads of six non-aligned states in their New Delhi Appeal, says, among other things, welcoming the Geneva agreement to resume talks between the USA and USSR.

“We reiterate our appeal for all-embracing halt to the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. Such a halt would greatly facilitate negotiations. Two specific steps today require special attention: the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and a comprehensive test ban treaty”. And the Athens communique of the Five Continent Peace Initiative (January 31st, 1985) says:

"We shall spare no effort in mobilizing all people against the threat of a nuclear holocaust, and in convincing the nuclear powers to abide by the voice of reason and to pursue serious negotiations aiming at halting the nuclear arms race, achieving substantial reductions of the existing nuclear arsenals and ultimately eliminating nuclear arms everywhere".

The participants also welcomed the efforts by the Contadora group for a peaceful settlement in the explosive Central American situation.

The importance of continuing the process begun 10 years ago with the signing of the Helsinki Final Act on European Security was affirmed by the participants. The Round Table stressed the significance of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe and urged it to seek improved and broadened confidence-building measures for lessening tension by lowering offensive military postures on either side. Attention was also called to the continuing concern of some countries for nuclear-free-zones in their regions.

Security needs in a world with great numbers of nuclear weapons requires a global morality, a New International Moral Order based on the interests of the whole of humanity rather than on narrow national and regional interests, and a declaration from both sides pledging no first use; and agreeing to establish a nuclear-free corridor in Middle Europe. Participants urged also an agreement for the reduction of conventional weapons to parity on the lowest possible level.

### III. The Tasks of Religious Circles and Other Public Forces

III. The Tasks. The scientific projections of such phenomena as the nuclear winter have made us freshly aware of the scope and magnitude of the global threat facing humankind and have convinced us anew of our global responsibility, in cooperation between believers and secular people, to bring about a new moral order necessary to prevent a nuclear conflagration.

All major world religions teach justice, love of the neighbour and the sanctity of life. They teach also that genuine peace is peace with justice. Instead of allowing the world's resources to be expended on weapons of destruction, we urge that they used to feed the hungry, we must act with compassion, work for reconciliation and for liberation from oppression.

Our first and primary task therefore is education for peace with justice, both of ourselves and of our faithful, and beyond, the general



public of our nations. Education should lead to a change of mentality, from confrontation and mistrust to one of friendship, cooperation, confidence and mutual respect.

We pledge ourselves to work together. In our meetings we have found that we already share a unity in the goals of peace. Across all geographical, political, cultural and ideological barriers, we are able to find fellowship and cooperation, for example the exchange between churches of the USA and the USSR. We need to expand this unity to include other religious and also secular organizations. We need to work both informally and programmatically with coalitions of people of good will, with scientists and public organizations in order to pool all human resources for the search for peace.

Some religious communities have included peace and efforts for disarmament as a part of their prayers and preaching. As we struggle against these global dangers, we have found a new solidarity among religions in some parts of the world. At the same time, through this experience, we have become aware that the only way to overcome mistrust is to create occasions for dialogue and meetings among people and among those in positions of authority in our countries.

As religious organizations, we should therefore

- a) express our support for the renewed dialogue and negotiations between the governments of the USA and the USSR,
- b) support efforts of peace movements promoting ways to limit nuclear armaments through a nuclear freeze, through the creation of nuclear weapons-free zones, through arms limitation and reduction agreements, through a comprehensive test ban treaty and other such proposals,
- c) support ongoing organizations and processes which foster dialogue and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, such as the Helsinki Process and, the United Nations Organization, which is the only organization available to all nations, and is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year,
- d) dispel mistrust and caricature of each other by nations and peoples,
- e) organize visits of co-religionists between countries hostile to each other,
- f) use existing, international religious organizations to promote common discussion on issues of justice and peace,
- g) teach our people that the only security that any nation can have is the common security of all nations,

h) develop, in cooperation with other religious and secular bodies, a formulation of the basic principles of a new international moral order founded on common human interests and not on narrow national or regional interests,

i) disseminate information, in a form that can be grasped by ordinary people, on the results of scientific studies on the disastrous consequences of a nuclear war,

j) produce literary pieces (fiction, short stories, films, dramas) which present these data in a compelling form,

k) exert pressure on the media in our countries to disseminate accurate information on the disastrous consequences of any nuclear war, emphasizing its global aspects.

May the Spirit that guides the destiny of humanity lead us to peace with justice, to freedom and dignity, and to a world without nuclear weapons.



## News and Notes

### 1. "Reflections on the Nobel Peace Prize"

(These are parts of Tutu's Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech)

New hope has sprung in the breasts of many as a result of this prize, the mother watching her child starve in a Bantustan homeland resettlement camp, or one whose flimsy plastic covering was demolished by the authorities in a squatter camp in Cape Town, the man emasculated by the pass laws as he lived for 11 months in a single hostel, the student receiving an inferior education, the activist languishing in a consulate or solitary confinement cell, being tortured because he thought he was human and wanted that God-given right recognized, the exile longing to kiss the soil of her much loved motherland, the political prisoner watching the days of a life sentence go by like the drip of a faulty tap...

A new hope has been kindled in the breasts of millions who are voiceless, oppressed, dispossessed, tortured by powerful tyrants, lacking elementary human rights in Latin America, in southeast Asia, the Far East, in many parts of Africa and behind the Iron Curtain...

How wonderful, how appropriate that this award is made today, 10 December, UN Human Rights Day. It says more eloquently than anything else that this is God's world and that he is in charge, that our cause is a just cause and that we will attain human rights in South Africa and everywhere in the world. We shall be free in South Africa and everywhere in the world...

### 2. Coptic Orthodox Patriarch resumes functions

Pope Shenouda III was released from internal exile in Egypt (3 January). He returned to Cairo after 40 months of confinement in the Wadi Natrun desert monastery. Just before he was assassinated, President Sadat accused the pope of religious extremism and presenting threats to national unity. He also withdrew the 1971 government decree endorsing the election of Pope Shenouda III as Coptic Church head. There are an estimated five-to-six million Coptic Christians in Egypt, a country predominantly Muslim.

The WCC general secretary Emilio Castro cabled Shenouda immediately following his release, offering his prayers and best wishes. He expressed joy at this being his first message after taking charge as chief executive of the WCC in early January. In another message, addressed to President Hosni Mubarak, he said

that "together with the Coptic Orthodox Church the WCC rejoices in the resumption of the full functions of His Holiness pope Shenouda III. We pray for God's blessings upon your efforts for the welfare of all the people of Egypt.

### 3. Russian Orthodox honour former WCC chief

When former WCC general secretary Dr. Philip Potter retired at the end of last year, the Russian Orthodox Church conferred their high award on him, the order of Saint Prince Vladimir. From Moscow, Patriarch Pimen instructed the Geneva representative of the Patriarchate to make the presentation "in recognition of your great services for the cause of pan-Christian unity and peace and justice in international relations". He also thanked Philip Potter for all co-operation extended to the Russian Orthodox Church, contributing to the activities of the World Council of Churches, as one of its members (EPS). Our own Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios was awarded this honour some years ago, as well as the higher order of St. Sergius First Rank (KMG)

### 4. "Armenian Claims and Ecumenical Responsibility"

[This item is excerpted from the concluding sections of the WCC booklet, "Armenia: The Continuing Tragedy"]

...It may be time that the ecumenical community of churches pay greater attention to the claims of Armenians, with a view to helping the Armenian sister churches in their struggle to obtain justice for their people. The World Council of Churches took a step in this direction when it issued a declaration on the Armenian Genocide during the WCC Sixth Assembly in Vancouver in the summer of 1983 [EPS 83. 10. 21].

Can the claims of the Armenian people be specified? Armenians of all places and of all adherence cry for justice, they expect and demand that some kind of reparation be made in order to compensate, albeit partly, the monstrous crimes of which they have been victims. They are convinced that the responsibility for making justice rests primarily on the Turkish government of today, although the powers that influence international affairs have a role to play as well. On this there is unanimity, and this unanimity is the strength of the Armenian cause.

However, when it comes to expressing the nature of the justice claimed, one faces a different situation. Armenians do not have one common body that can act as a representative voice of the entire people. Neither one of the various political parties in the diaspora, nor the churches, nor the authorities in Soviet Armenia can claim to be alone representative of the Armenians at large. This lack of a common Armenian platform is another one of the tragic consequences of the disruption of Armenian life caused by the genocide.



There are therefore differing - if not contradictory - articulations of the justice claim in the Armenian diaspora. Whereas in Soviet Armenia, concerns on this matter - assuming that these concerns do play some political role there - follow geopolitical considerations of another nature.

Many Armenians still dream of the reconstitution of the great Armenian Empire of Tigran II, during the first century B.C., the borders of which stretched from the Caspian Sea to the Black and Mediterranean Seas. This glorious past is the idealized archetype of the nation sung by poets and romantic writers. Although this dream has no contemporary political weight, it stands in the distant horizon as a symbol of Armenian achievement.

But claims for justice must come down to more tangible realities. Most Armenians refer to the Treaty of Sevres of 10 August 1920...as a ground for territorial claims which is both concrete, historically valid and invested of certain international juridical credit: The signatories of this treaty (Turkey and Allied Powers) not only recognize Armenia as a free and independent state (Article 88), but also agree that the frontiers of the new state should include the provinces of Erzerum, Trebizond, Van and Bitlis (Article 89), as well as provide an outlet to the Black Sea as indicated in the geographical boundaries determined by US President Woodrow Wilson, at the request of the signatories. These "Wilsonian" borders did not include Cilicia and Diarbekir. All in all it covered an area of about 72,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The treaty of Sevres...was never implemented. Kemalist Turkey soon repudiated it. The Allied nations lacked the will to have it respected....

Next to the claims based on the Treaty of Sevres, one must mention another territorial claim, vivid in the minds and hearts of many Armenians, particularly those closer to the Armenian Revolutionary Federation. When the heroic but short-lived Republic of Armenia was proclaimed on 28 May 1918, the Dashnak leaders of the republic sought to negotiate (alas from a position of weakness) both with Turkish and Russian authorities in view of fixing the boundaries of the new state. The new boundaries should include the provinces of Kars, Ardahan, Nakhichevan and the Armenian territories today annexed to Georgia. ...Although just a fragment of "historical Armenia", would have represented the inner heart of an Armenian homeland.

A third manifestation of the Armenians' claim for justice has to do with Soviet Armenia itself. Quite apart from the question of the freedom of the Socialist Republic of Armenia to stay or not to stay within the Soviet Union, there is the question of the return to Soviet

Armenia of the Armenian provinces of Akhalkalak and Lori (today under Azerbaijan administration) and the so-called Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan (clearly a geopolitical aberration). Most of these territories have either been in the past, or are today, densely populated by Armenians, and are unquestionably essential for Armenia's development and economic stability. The present state of affairs which separates these territories from Soviet Armenia were to a large extent decided at two Turkish-Russian agreements, namely the Treaty of Moscow (March 1921) and the Kars Conference (October 1921).

These three territorial claims are not contradictory to each other. They are all manifestations of the survival desire of a wounded people, of the legitimate aspiration of a nation whose land has been taken away by brutal force. They indicate that territorial claims do constitute a major concern of the justice claims of the Armenian people as a whole.

But Armenians have another, more immediate and perhaps simpler claim to make. Turkey should acknowledge what the former regime did to the Armenians. The Turkish government and Turkish universities and all their supporters should cease the rather pathological non-recognition of historical fact and face the reality which has made millions of present-day Armenians essentially homeless.

...The Armenian churches are an integral part of the ecumenical community of churches. They seek, like other churches, to live and celebrate the unity of the One Church of Jesus Christ. The Armenian Apostolic Church is one of the oldest churches in Christendom. It is a church which has a national character and a cultural expression which makes it distinct from other churches, but it shares its own experience with all other churches in the ecumenical community, thus enriching abundantly the life of the whole.

What Armenians have to share is what Christ himself shared with his church: his suffering and death on the cross. The story of the Armenian people, as we have seen, is a story of continuing tragedy. The hardships suffered by this people over the centuries culminated in atrocities of unspeakable proportions. Genocide leaves its mark on both the perpetrators and the victims. Neither the guilt nor the pain can be eradicated. It will be visited upon the children and the children's children. ...Violence was the cause, but violence breeds violence and can therefore never be the solution. Whatever the claims of Armenians and whatever the denials of Turkey, any solution can only be found through dialogue. It is here that the ecumenical community may make its most profound contribution....

(Courtesy—EPS)



### 5. Christian Winners To Lok Sabha

Christians figure among the new members in the eighth Lok Sabha. The losers include also Christians.

Mr. P. A. Sangma (Protestant). : Union State Minister was re-elected from Meghalaya. His was one of the last results announced.

Mr. Simon Tigga (Prot.) was elected from the Khunti constituency on a Congress (I) ticket. He defeated the sitting member Mr. N. E. Horo of the Jharkand Party.

Mr. Oscar Fernandes (R.C.) another Congress (I) candidate won the Udupi seat in Karnataka. He defeated a former Lok Sabha speaker, Mr. K. S. Hegde of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Mr. N. Dennis and Mr. Adakalaraj are two Christians elected from Tamil Nadu. They contested the elections on Congress I ticket. Mr. Dennis won the Nagercoil seat while Mr. Adakalaraj got the Trichy seat.

Kerala elected six Christians. Four belong to the Congress (I) and one each to the Janata and Kerala Congress - Joseph group.

Prof. K. V. Thomas, a Congress I candidate, defeated Mr. K. V. Kochunni of Congress (S) in Ernakulam. Mr. P. J. Kurian (Marthoma) was elected from the Idukki seat on a Congress I ticket. He defeated another Christian, Mr. C. A. Kurian of the Communist Party of India.

Mr. Charles Abraham (C S I) won the Trivandrum seat defeating a Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Party candidate, Mr. Neelalohita Nadar. This seat had caught the nation's attention as the main two rivals belonged to the same Nadar community, but to different religions.

Mr. P. A. Antony is another Congress candidate who was elected from Trichur. He defeated Mr. V. V. Raghavan of the CPI.

Mr. George Joseph Mundackal (RC) was elected on a Kerala Congress, (Joseph group) ticket from Muvattupuzha. He defeated the Marxist party candidate Mr. P. P. Esthose by over 95,000 votes. Mr. Thamban Joseph won on Janata ticket from Mavelikara. He defeated Mr. T. N. Upendra of the National Democratic Party.

(Courtesy—SAR News)

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I, Rev. Dr. K. M. George, hereby declare that particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sd/-

REV. DR. K. M. GEORGE

15-3-1985



# THE STAR OF THE EAST

THE STAR OF THE EAST is an Indian Orthodox ecumenical quarterly published under the editorial responsibility of Metropolitan Dr. Paulos Gregorios of Delhi (formerly Fr. Paul Verghese). It is the continuation of an occasional journal carrying the same name originally published by the late Rev. Dr. C. T. Eapen of the Orthodox Syrian Church of India. The journal will deal with contemporary issues of ecumenism, especially from the perspective of the Orthodox Churches, and will carry news about the major events in the life of these Churches.

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